

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 16424 01 OF 02 281909Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /099 W

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R 281856Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2188

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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PAGE 02 BONN 16424 01 OF 02 281909Z

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 16424

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW, PINT

SUBJECT: CDU SECRETARY GENERAL RENEWS ATTACKS
ON DGB UNIONS

REF: BONN 15941

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT A PRESS CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 22, CDU SECRETARY GENERAL KURT BIEDENKOPF REITERATED HIS CHARGES OF AN "ENTANGLEMENT" BETWEEN SPD AND TRADE UNIONS. HE PRESENTED 15 NEW CASES PURPORTING TO SHOW INAPPROPRIATE UNION SUPPORT OF THE SPD IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IN RESPONSE, THE SPD PRESIDUM CALLED ON CDU CHAIRMAN DR. HELMUT KOHL "TO DISSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THE ANTI-UNION CAMPAIGN OF HIS SECRETARY GENERAL IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL HARMONY." THE DGB HAS NOT YET REACTED SPECIFICALLY TO BIEDENKOPF'S NEW CHARGES BUT DENIED BIEDENKOPF SPACE FOR HIS REMARKS IN ITS PAPER "WELT DER ARBEIT." AT THE CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION CONVENTION IN HAMBURG ALL LEADING SPD AND UNION SPEAKERS SHARPLY ATTACKED BIEDENKOPF AND HIS CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT DGB UNION LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

1. CDU'S BIEDENKOPF, ON SEPTEMBER 22, ONCE AGAIN ATTACKED WHAT HE CONSIDERS STRONG PRO-SPD BIAS WITHIN THE SUPPOSEDLY INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS. HE PRODUCED DOCUMENTATION OF 15 NEW EXAMPLES SHOWING, INTER ALIA, THE JOINT SPONSORING AND FINANCING OF SPD ELECTION RALLIES BY LOCAL SPD AND UNION ORGANIZATIONS, THE ABUSE OF UNION MEETINGS FOR SPD ELECTION PROPAGANDA, AND THE PUBLICATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS PAID BY THE UNIONS WITH AN ESTIMATED VALUE OF DM 440,000 IN AN SPD ELECTION MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTED FREE OF CHARGE IN THE RUHR.

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PAGE 03 BONN 16424 01 OF 02 281909Z

2. BIEDENKOPF SAID THAT THE CDU HAD RECEIVED 750 TO 800 LETTERS CHARGING 500 NEW CASES OF ENTANGLEMENT OF INTERESTS BETWEEN UNIONS AND SPD OR ABUSE OF UNION POWER. HE PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AFTER THE ELECTIONS TO INVESTIGATE CASES OF ABUSE OF UNION POWER AND TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES IN MAJOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF EQUAL

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE
ELECTIONS.

3. BIEDENKOPF ADMITTED THAT EIGHT CASES OF ALLEGED
ENTANGLEMENT HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE NEW
DOCUMENTATION. OF HIS PREVIOUS PRESENTATION OF 22
SPECIFIC CHARGES, SEVERAL HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY
CHALLENGED IN COURT ON WHAT BIEDENKOPF CHOSE TO CALL
"TECHNICAL ERRORS." ACCORDING TO BIEDENKOPF, THE
CHARGES HAD TO BE WITHDRAWN IN FOUR CASES SINCE THE
CDU WITNESSES FOR SOME REASON DID NOT WISH TO
MAINTAIN THEIR ORIGINAL STATEMENTS. FOUR CASES ARE
STILL PENDING, BUT IN ONE, AN INJUNCTION
REQUESTED BY A UNION AGAINST THE CDU HAD BEEN REJECTED
BY THE COURT. THE FACT THAT WITNESSES WOULD NOT
RESTATE BEFORE THE COURT WHAT THEY REPORTED IN
PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS OUT OF FEAR THAT THEY MAY
SUFFER DISADVANTAGES TENDED TO CONFIRM HIS CHARGES,
BIEDENKOPF EMPHASIZED.

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PAGE 01 BONN 16424 02 OF 02 281920Z

67

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PAGE 02 BONN 16424 02 OF 02 281920Z

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 16424

4. BIEDENKOPF ALSO CHALLENGED THE FDP LEADERSHIP TO TAKE A STAND IN THIS CONFLICT. THE FDP, HE CLAIMED, PRESENTS ITSELF AS A GUARANTOR OF FREEDOM, BUT WHEREVER FREEDOM IS BEING TESTED, THE FDP TAKES COVER.

5. RESPONDING TO BIEDENKOPF'S CHARGES, THE SPD PRESIDUM HAS CALLED UPON CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE HELMUT KOHL TO DISSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THE ANTI-UNION CAMPAIGN OF HIS SECRETARY GENERAL. SPD ARGUED THAT BIEDENKOPF'S CHARGES WERE A BALD ATTEMPT TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE CLOSE ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE CDU/CSU AND ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS AND CATHOLIC GROUPINGS.

6. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE FDP, GERWALD, REJECTED BIEDENKOPF'S ACCUSATIONS AS "NAKED SHAMELESSNESS" AND AFFIRMED THAT, IN CONTRAST TO THE CDU/CSU, THE FDP HAS CONDUCTED ITS ELECTION CAMPAIGN ON ITS OWN

WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF TRADE UNIONS OR CHURCHES.

7. REACTING TO BIEDENKOPF'S FIRST BARRAGE, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT (SPD) ON SEPT 19 TOLD THE DELEGATES OF THE CONVENTION OF THE CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION MEETING IN HAMBURG THAT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CLEARLY TO TAKE SIDES WITH THE UNIONS WHICH ARE NOW BEING DEFAMED AND ATTACKED. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NATURALLY INDEPENDENT FROM THE TRADE UNIONS, BUT IT IS WRITTEN NOWHERE THAT THE CHANCELLOR MUST BE NEUTRAL TOWARD THE TRADE UNIONS, AND HE WAS NOT NEUTRAL, SCHMIDT STRESSED. DGB PRESIDENT VETTER, AT THE SAME CONVENTION, REAFFIRMED THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS FROM ALL POLITICAL PARTIES BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BONN 16424 02 OF 02 281920Z

WARNED THAT THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE SLOGAN "FREE INSTEAD OF SOCIALIST TRADE UNIONS" NOT ONLY RISK ONE OF THE MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GERMAN LABOR MOVEMENT (THE UNIFIED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT EMBRACING SPD AND CDU TRADE UNIONISTS), BUT ALSO VIOLATE ITS SPIRIT AND HISTORY. VETTER STATED IN CONCLUSION: "LIBERAL SOCIALISM IS ONE OF THE SOURCES OF TRADE UNION POWER AND SOLIDARITY. WE WOULD NO LONGER BE A GERMAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION IF WE WOULD ALLOW THIS TO BE PUT INTO QUESTION."

8. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT BIEDENKOPF'S NEW ACTION, WHICH ALSO WAS NOT COORDINATED WITH LEADING CDU TRADE UNIONISTS, HAS HAD A MOBILIZING AND SOLIDARIZATION EFFECT ON THE UNION LEADERSHIP AND RANK AND FILE, PARTICULARLY IN THE RUHR, BUT ALSO IN OTHER AREAS. MANY SEE BIEDENKOPF'S CHARGES AS A CONCERTED ATTACK ON THE LABOR MOVEMENT AS AN INSTITUTION. SOME DGB LEADERS ALLEGE THAT BIEDENKOPF IS BEGINNING A NEW CDU INITIATIVE TO JUSTIFY A LAW INTERFERING WITH TRADE UNION FREEDOM IN THE FRG AND A ROLLBACK OF SOCIAL GAINS SINCE 1969. IN ANY CASE, THE BACKLASH TO THE BIEDENKOPF CHARGES WITHIN THE TRADE UNIONS WILL MAKE THE SITUATION OF CDU TRADE UNION FUNCTIONARIES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT IN THE FUTURE, PARTICULARLY IN THE CASE OF AN ELECTION VICTORY OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION. SPD TRADE UNION LEADERS NOW SEEM TO BE FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT THE COALITION WILL WIN AND EVEN SOME CDU LABOR SOURCES MAINTAIN THAT BIEDENKOPF'S ATTACK HAS HURT THE CDU. BIEDENKOPF HAS TAKEN A CALCULATED RISK TO STRENGTHEN HIS CAMPAIGN IN THE RUHR BY ARTICULATING THIS NEW ISSUE, BUT FEW CDU LABOR SYMPATHIZERS ARE CONFIDENT OF A POSITIVE RESULT. WE SHOULD KNOW, HOWEVER, AFTER OCTOBER 3. HILLENBRAND

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